

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
1 February 2001 (01.02.2001)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 01/07454 A1

(51) International Patent Classification?:
C12N 9/10, A61K 31/706, A61P 35/00

C07H 19/04,

(74) Agents: KONSKI, Antoinette, F. et al.; Baker & McKenzie, 660 Hansen Way, Palo Alto, CA 94304 (US).

(21) International Application Number: PCT/US00/20008

(22) International Filing Date: 21 July 2000 (21.07.2000)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:
60/145,356 22 July 1999 (22.07.1999) US
60/145,437 23 July 1999 (23.07.1999) US
60/191,315 21 March 2000 (21.03.2000) US

(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): NEWBIOTICS, INC. [US/US]; 11760-R Sorrento Valley Road, San Diego, CA 92121 (US).

(72) Inventors; and

(75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): SHEPARD, H., Michael [US/US]; 16825 Via de Santa Fe, Rancho Santa Fe, CA 92067 (US). CHAN, Ming, Fai [US/US]; 1642 Orchard Wood Road, Encinitas, CA 92024 (US). GROZIAK, Michael, P. [US/US]; 153 Primrose Way, Palo Alto, CA 94303 (US).

(81) Designated States (national): AE, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, CA, CH, CN, CU, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TR, TT, UA, UG, US, UZ, VN, YU, ZA, ZW.

(84) Designated States (regional): ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

Published:

- With international search report.
- Before the expiration of the time limit for amending the claims and to be republished in the event of receipt of amendments.

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

(54) Title: ENZYME CATALYZED THERAPEUTIC ACTIVATION

(57) Abstract: This invention provides novel substrate compounds that selectively inhibit the proliferation of pathological cells, for example, pathological cells that endogenously overexpress a target enzyme that confers resistance to biologic and chemotherapeutic agents. The enzyme acts on a substrate compound to 1) convert it to a cellular toxin and/or 2) release a toxic byproduct. In one embodiment, the activity of the target enzyme has been greatly enhanced in a target cell as a result of loss of tumor suppressor function and/or selection resulting from previous exposure to chemotherapy. In another embodiment, the pathological cell contains a target enzyme that is an expression product of an infectious agent in the cell. Further provided by this invention is a method for treating a subject by delivering to the subject a prodrug as described herein. The prodrugs of this invention may be used alone or in combination with other chemotherapeutics or alternative anti-cancer therapies such as radiation.

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